



Texas Department of Insurance
Division of Workers' Compensation
Medical Fee Dispute Resolution, MS-48
7551 Metro Center Drive, Suite 100 • Austin, Texas 78744-1609

MEDICAL FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FINDINGS AND DECISION

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Requestor Name and Address: VISTA HEALTHCARE 4301 VISTA RD PASADENA TX 77503	MFDR Tracking #: M4-03-7076-01
	DWC Claim #:
	Injured Employee:
Respondent Name and Box #: AMERICAN ZURICH INSURANCE CO Box #: 19	Date of Injury:
	Employer Name:
	Insurance Carrier #:

PART II: REQUESTOR'S POSITION SUMMARY

Requestor's Position Summary taken from the *Table of Disputes Services*: "The Carrier has not provided the proper payment exception code In [sic] this instance, which is in violation of the Texas Administrative Code. No explanation or request of missing documentation forwarded by Carrier within 14 days of receipt of medical bill in compliance with TWCC Administrative Code."

Amount in Dispute: \$14,687.64

PART III: RESPONDENT'S POSITION SUMMARY

Respondent's Position Summary: "Carrier denied additional payment notifying the HCP that it failed to adequately document the services rendered. The HCP's assertion that it had no duty to respond to a reasonable request for additional documentation would seem unfounded, regardless of whether or not the 14-day requirement was met. Carrier would also further assert that it complied with all TWCC rules and procedures."

PART IV: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Date(s) of Service	Denial Code(s)	Disputed Service	Amount in Dispute	Amount Due
6/18/2002	N	Outpatient Surgery	\$14,687.64	\$0.00
			Total Due:	\$0.00

PART V: REVIEW OF SUMMARY, METHODOLOGY AND EXPLANATION

Texas Labor Code §413.011(a-d), titled *Reimbursement Policies and Guidelines*, and Division rule at 28 Texas Administrative Code §134.1, titled *Use of the Fee Guidelines*, effective May 16, 2002 set out the reimbursement guidelines.

This request for medical fee dispute resolution was received by the Division on May 19, 2003. Pursuant to Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, the Division notified the requestor on June 10, 2003 to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute as set forth in the rule.

- For the services involved in this dispute, the respondent reduced or denied payment with reason code:
 - N-Not documented
- This dispute relates to services with reimbursement subject to the provisions of Division rule at 28 TAC §134.1, effective May 16, 2002, 27 TexReg 4047, which requires that "Reimbursement for services not identified in an established fee guideline shall be reimbursed at fair and reasonable rates as described in the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, §413.011 until such period that specific fee guidelines are established by the commission
- Texas Labor Code §413.011(d) requires that fee guidelines must be fair and reasonable and designed to ensure the quality of medical care and to achieve effective medical cost control. The guidelines may not provide for payment of a fee in excess of the fee charged for similar treatment of an injured individual of an equivalent standard of living and paid by that individual or by someone acting on that individual's behalf. It further requires that the Division consider the increased security of payment afforded by the Act in establishing the fee guidelines.

4. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(B), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including "a copy of any pertinent medical records." Review of the documentation submitted by the requestor finds that the requestor has not provided medical records to support the services in dispute. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(B).
5. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(i), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including a statement of the disputed issue(s) that shall include "a description of the healthcare for which payment is in dispute." Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor did not provide a description of the healthcare for which payment is in dispute. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(i).
6. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(ii), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including a statement of the disputed issue(s) that shall include "the requestor's reasoning for why the disputed fees should be paid." Review of the submitted documentation finds no documentation of the requestor's reasoning for why the disputed fees should be paid. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(ii).
7. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(iii), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including a statement of the disputed issue(s) that shall include "how the Texas Labor Code and commission [now the Division] rules, and fee guidelines, impact the disputed fee issues." Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor did not state how the Texas Labor Code and Division rules impact the disputed fee issues. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(iii).
8. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(iv), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to send additional documentation relevant to the fee dispute including a statement of the disputed issue(s) that shall include "how the submitted documentation supports the requestor position for each disputed fee issue." Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor did not state how the submitted documentation supports the requestor's position for each disputed fee issue. The Division concludes that the requestor has not met the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(C)(iv).
9. Division rule at 28 TAC §133.307(g)(3)(D), effective January 1, 2003, 27 TexReg 12282, applicable to disputes filed on or after January 1, 2003, requires the requestor to provide "documentation that discusses, demonstrates, and justifies that the payment amount being sought is a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement." Review of the submitted documentation finds that:
 - The Division has previously found that "hospital charges are not a valid indicator of a hospital's costs of providing services nor of what is being paid by other payors," as stated in the adoption preamble to the Division's former *Acute Care Inpatient Hospital Fee Guideline*, 22 TexReg 6276 (July 4, 1997). It further states that "Alternative methods of reimbursement were considered... and rejected because they use hospital charges as their basis and allow the hospitals to affect their reimbursement by inflating their charges..." 22 TexReg 6268-6269. Therefore, the use of a hospital's "usual and customary" charges cannot be favorably considered when no other data or documentation was submitted to support that the payment amount being sought is a fair and reasonable reimbursement for the services in dispute.
 - In support of the requested reimbursement, the requestor submitted redacted explanations of benefits, and selected portions of EOBs, from various sample insurance carriers. However, the requestor did not discuss or explain how the sample EOBs support the requestor's position that additional payment is due. Review of the submitted documentation finds that the requestor did not establish that the sample EOBs are for services that are substantially similar to the services in dispute. The carriers' reimbursement methodologies are not described on the EOBs. Nor did the requestor explain or discuss the sample carriers' methodologies or how the payment amount was determined for each sample EOB. The requestor did not discuss whether such payment was typical for such services or for the services in dispute.
 - The requestor did not submit documentation to support that payment of the amount sought is a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement for the services in this dispute.
 - The requestor did not support that payment of the requested amount would satisfy the requirements of Division rule at 28 TAC §134.1.

The request for additional reimbursement is not supported. Thorough review of the documentation submitted by the requestor finds that the requestor has not demonstrated or justified that payment of the amount sought would be a fair and reasonable rate of reimbursement for the services in dispute. Additional payment cannot be recommended.

10. The Division would like to emphasize that individual medical fee dispute outcomes rely upon the evidence presented by the requestor and respondent during dispute resolution, and the thorough review and consideration of that evidence. After thorough review and consideration of all the evidence presented by the parties to this dispute, it is determined that the submitted documentation does not support the reimbursement amount sought by the requestor. The Division concludes that this dispute was not filed in the form and manner prescribed under Division rules at 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307(g)(3)(B), §133.307(g)(3)(C), and §133.307(g)(3)(D). The Division further concludes that the requestor failed to support its position that additional reimbursement is due. As a result, the amount ordered is \$0.00.

PART VI: GENERAL PAYMENT POLICIES/REFERENCES

Texas Labor Code §413.011(a-d), §413.031 and §413.0311
28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307, §134.1
Texas Government Code, Chapter 2001, Subchapter G

PART VII: DIVISION DECISION

Based upon the documentation submitted by the parties and in accordance with the provisions of Texas Labor Code §413.031, the Division has determined that the requestor is not entitled to additional reimbursement for the services involved in this dispute.

DECISION/ORDER:

_____	Margaret Q. Ojeda	May 3, 2011
Authorized Signature	Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer	Date

PART VIII: YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST AN APPEAL

Either party to this medical fee dispute has a right to request an appeal. A request for hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the DWC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **20** (twenty) days of your receipt of this decision. A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers Compensation, P.O. Box 17787, Austin, Texas, 78744. **Please include a copy of the Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision** together with other required information specified in Division rule at 28 TAC §148.3(c).

Under Texas Labor Code §413.0311, your appeal will be handled by a Division hearing under Title 28 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 142 Rules if the total amount sought does not exceed \$2,000. If the total amount sought exceeds \$2,000, a hearing will be conducted by the State Office of Administrative Hearings under Texas Labor Code §413.031.

Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 512-804-4812.